

Ag in Action



February/March 2005

From: The Director's Desk

Arizona has received its fair share of rain lately with totals for February already surpassing what we normally see. This means we at the Department will be listening to our farmers and ranchers across the State and do our best to respond to what they need.

In January, we extended the cotton plowing deadline in key portions of the State to ensure our constituents were able to save their crops and fields. The purpose of this extension was not only to help the farmer work around the State's recent abnormal weather patterns, but also to help maintain a period of time when the ground was free of cotton debris, keeping potential bugs and pests at bay.

The reason this extension applied only to cotton is because the primary pests of concern in our State are typically found in cotton. These pests include Pink Boll Worm and Cotton Boll Weevil.

This is just one example of how we are working to help those in agribusiness work around nature's often unpredictable weather incidents. We have done this in the past and we will continue to do so in the future.

Lab's Latest

SAL Staff Conduct Inspector Training Sessions Chris Baptista, SAL Entomologist

On February 12, SAL entomologist Chris Baptista participated in an international scientific study of a 125 million year old fossil scorpion preserved in ancient amber (fossilized tree sap) from northern Lebanon.

The fossil measured only 6 mm (1/4 in) and is the oldest known scorpion to have been preserved in amber. Its owner, who has dual citizenship in both Lebanon and Germany, estimates its worth at \$300,000. Though older fossil scorpions have been found, these are often only carbon films or imprints. The relatively complete condition of this specimen, along with the greater preservation of detail afforded by the amber matrix, has allowed scientists a rare look into scorpion evolution.



Ancient fossilized scorpion preserved in ancient amber.

Because this rare and scientifically important specimen was about to be taken out of the US by its owner, who for a short time was staying in Tucson, and because of Chris' expertise in entomology and in the use of sophisticated digital imaging technology at the SAL, researchers at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C. asked Chris to pick up the specimen, digitally image critical features of the fossil, and relay them electronically to the Smithsonian and other researchers in California and Bulgaria.



The owner of the fossil and Chris Baptista in the SAL.

Working with scientists on two speakerphones and by e-mail, Chris, using the SAL's digital imaging system, transmitted 37 digital images exemplifying features of an ancient scorpion never before seen. (cntd. on page 2)

ACTION

Yuma Workplace Safety Day

Marcia Colquitt, ACT Field Consultant



The 7th Annual Yuma Lettuce Days took place in historic downtown Yuma on January 21-23, 2005. The annual event honors Yuma-area growers who produce nearly 3 trillion pounds of lettuce and other vegetables a year. Marcia Colquitt and Jennifer Weber, ACT field consultants, participated in this year's event that celebrated Yuma's number one industry, agriculture.

Being familiar with Yuma's agriculture through the ACT pesticide program, Jennifer was amazed at the many agricultural activities going on. Her comment about the festivities was that "the event definitely offered something for everyone." There were interactive agricultural events, educational programs such as the USDA's safe food handling mobile unit and farm equipment displays featuring antique farm equipment.



Shown here is a 1951, Allis-Charmar WD model tractor, compliments of Doug Mellon Farms. It has a gas powered engine with 34 horsepower, is water cooled and

has a 3 wheel drive. In 1951 the tractor sold new for \$1830.

In addition, there was live entertainment, arts and crafts and an information booth attended by the Yuma Area Ag Council. The YAAC promotes the value of local agriculture through education and awareness programs and informs the public about issues concerning local agriculture. Yuma conservationist Bobbie McDermott and other YAAC members assisted people and promoted programs such as the Department's very own Arizona Grown program.



To sum up Yuma Lettuce Days, Marcia said, "Well, it was a great promotion for the number one producing crop grown in the Yuma area."

Lab's Latest (cntd. from page 1)

SAL Staff Conduct Inspector Training Sessions

Anna Pfender, Laboratory Manager

SAL Manager Attends Grant Writing Workshop

SAL Manager David Klein attended a two-day grant writing workshop hosted by the City of Glendale on February 3rd and 4th. The workshop, presented by Grant Writing USA, focused on the different types of grants, grant writing techniques and the websites that are available for researching grants. The seminar addressed many of the errors and pitfalls a grant writer commonly makes and provided useful techniques to avoid them. Some of the topics covered in great detail were the value of a well thought out needs assessment; clear, focused goals and objectives, grant writing methods and techniques and a brief overview of budgets as related to grant proposals. The information provided was very informative, timely and quite useful. David would like to thank Kathleen Ryan of ACT for her assistance in obtaining the information about the grant writing workshop.

SAL Chemists Attend e-Seminar

Residue chemists at the lab recently attended an e-seminar entitled: Newly Developed Methods for Determination of Perchlorates in Drinking Water. The seminar was presented by the EPA's Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water. The one-hour seminar discussed sampling methods and preservation, EPA methods 314.0 and 332.0 for determination of Perchlorate and a discussion on the possible health effects of Perchlorate. Perchlorate is an oxidizer used in the manufacture of missile propellants for the military and also in automobile airbag systems. The discussion centered around the results of studies conducted in various labs around the country comparing the two methods and the instruments.

ESD Expounds

Brenda Ball

On Saturday, January 22, 2005, ESD Compliance Manager Brenda Ball traveled to Memphis, Tennessee to attend the 2005 Mid-Year Meeting of the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO). The meeting ran through Wednesday, January 26, 2005 and allowed participants to join in on discussions of the many committees of AAFCO as well as hear presentations from states, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and industry members.

One important note was the discovery that it takes much less infected prohibited material in ruminant feed than originally thought to cause Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) or "Mad Cow Disease" in ruminants than originally thought. Much discussion revolved around the need for on-farm regulation, particularly of prohibited material and on-farm mixers and manufacturers. A couple states are already in stages of obtaining authority to inspect on farm. Industry commercial feed manufacturers and livestock and poultry producers also indicated their support for this next step in protecting our food supply. Discussion also included proposals for requirements to mark prohibited material with dyes or restricting the use of the material and requiring regulatory authority over recipients of the prohibited material. ESD inspectors conduct BSE inspections of feed manufacturers and distributors under a cooperative agreement with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Other topics included feed inspector training for both beginning and advanced inspectors, including what material should be covered and requirements to meet the

definition of an advanced feed inspector. ESD plans on sending inspectors to advanced training being held in California starting April 28 and beginning training for new inspectors being held September 26 - 28, 2005 in Oklahoma City, OK.

The groups discussed the many issues involving unapproved claims and ingredients, particularly with pet foods. The E-Commerce Committee discussed the next proposed internet "surf day" project slated to target dairy cattle products with problems dealing with unapproved ingredients, problematic claims and labeling issues - particularly as they relate to prohibited material.

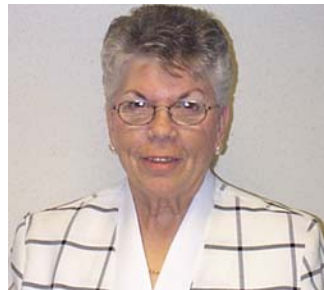
ESD is charged with inspections of animal feed manufacturers, distributors and retail establishments to ensure the quality of animal feed products and proper labeling. These inspections are done for the protection of consumers.

Hires and Retires

We have no new hires to report this month.

Linda Arnold

On February 28th, Linda Arnold will retire from the



Department of Agriculture after eleven years of service with the State of Arizona. Linda began her career with the State at the Department of Revenue, where she spent seven of those years. Looking for a change, she then migrated

across the street to the Department of Agriculture where she has been a valued team member in the Accounting Department for approximately four years.

Linda and her husband Gene, who retires on the same day, enjoy going to the movies and "camping" in their fifth wheel trailer and look forward to seeing more of the United States after retirement. At some point, they are even hoping to drive their fifth wheel to Alaska for a long, relaxing vacation.

We in the Accounting Department, wish Linda and Gene an adventurous and relaxing retirement and hope that they can visit all the places that they have dreamed of over the years.

SECC Snipits!

Agency SECC Committee Thanks Employees for the 2004 Campaign

Pat Stevens, ADA SECC Coordinator



the ***SECC Charity Classic 2005 – ARIZONA CARES***.

The Agency's SECC Committee would like to say 'THANK YOU' to all Department of Agriculture Employees for their generosity in the 2004 SECC Campaign and announces plans for our 2005 SECC golf tournament,

Thanks to the generosity of our employees, the Department of Agriculture (ADA) raised \$42,787 in the 2004 SECC Campaign, which ended February 11, 2005. This is 6.59% above our agency's 2004 SECC goal of \$40,141. The SECC 2004 statewide campaign raised over \$1.65 million, including over \$25,000 for tsunami relief efforts.

To help say Thank You to our employees, the ADA SECC Committee held a 'Thank You' continental breakfast at the main office on Monday, February 14, 2005. Similar 'Thank You' events were held at various locations around the state.



Agency employees enjoy a continental breakfast on Valentine's Day after all their contributions to SECC.

The SECC provides financial contributions to more than 600 health and human services agencies throughout the state, nation and abroad. To be included in SECC, all of these agencies must have an Arizona presence. These agencies range from local organizations that help your family and friends to organizations that focus on national and global concerns. The SECC raises money for hundreds of charitable organizations that help fellow

state employees, their families and one out of three Arizonans.

The 2005 SECC Campaign looks like it may even be better than 2004. We are close to finalizing plans for one of our main events, the ***SECC Charity Classic 2005 – ARIZONA CARES***. The year's golf tournament will be held at the Trilogy Golf Club at Power Ranch on May 14, 2005 and proceeds will benefit the **Arizona National Guard Family Assistance Fund**. The Arizona National Guard Family Assistance Fund is dedicated to the general welfare of all Arizona Guard and Reserve Component military families and provides emergency financial assistance to service members and their dependents.

Today's Reserve Component military families face a lifestyle that is comprised of frequent deployments, resulting in increased family separations and stressful challenges. Unfortunately, when a Guard or Reserve member is deployed to long term active duty, many private sector employers cannot pay that employee the difference between their normal pay and what they earn while on active duty. This frequently causes severe financial hardships. No mother or father should have to decide which of their children will get needed dental/medical care because they don't have the money to pay for the deductible or co-pay for both children. Nor should they have to decide between repairing the car or putting food on the table. Yet these are decisions that many Guard and Reserve member's families face. Currently, there are over 1,750 Arizona National Guard and Reserve Component members on long term deployment overseas.

The National Guard Family Assistance Fund provides needed emergency financial assistance to both service members and their families. All funding for the National Guard Family Assistance Fund is through corporate and individual donations. It does not receive any federal or state funds. **100% of monies received by the fund go to Guard and Reserve families or soldiers.**

The SECC Charity Classic 2005 – ARIZONA CARES is expecting 140–150 participants plus guests and volunteers. Additionally, Bryan Media Group Inc., is producing a video Public Service Announcement to air from approximately March 21 through mid-May and we anticipate additional media coverage. More details on the tournament will appear in next month's edition.

If you should be interested in participating in the tournament or would like to be a sponsor, please contact Pat Stevens at 602-542-4316 or pstevens@azda.gov. The SECC is conducted in partnership with the Valley of the Sun United Way (501 (c)(3) 86-0104419).



Marcia Colquitt with ACT Phoenix and Gary Rochester with CFV Yuma are the proud recipients of the SECC Valentine's Gift Basket Raffle!

Ag-Itude!

Stewart Jacobsen, Chair of Employee Recognition Committee



The Employee Recognition Committee (ERC) has made some changes to the way it normally does business and the presentation of Ag-Itude Awards, Employee of the Month and Leader of the Quarter Awards. The changes will be effective with the January, 2005 awards announcement.

The "Years of Service Awards" in December was the start. This was usually the responsibility of the ERC with Human Resources Dept providing dates. The awards, pins and certificates were traditionally handed out during the Employee Development Workshop (EDW), held once a year. Unfortunately, because of budget constraints, for the past several years, we haven't held an EDW so this important aspect of employee recognition fell by the wayside so the ERC decided to take the lead. We asked HR for input and they helped immensely. The Years of Service Awards ceremony was a huge success and will become an annual event. If you have suggestions as to how to make it better next year, let us know. Remember... we're here for YOU!

Our next venture is the "Employee of the Year" and the "Leader of the Year" awards. This was usually a function of a select committee sequestered for this specific purpose. The ERC decided to let you, the ADA employees', vote on these prestigious awards. You will find ballots in your pay envelope with the 12 Employees of the Month for this past year and the 3 Leaders of the Quarter (there was one quarter with no Leader nominated). All you have to do is, mark the box corresponding to the employee you think deserves Employee of the Year and Leader of the Year. Return

the ballot to HR or deposit into the box in the lobby marked "Employee of the Year and Leader of the Year Ballot Box". There's no need to put your name on it: All votes will be anonymous. After all the votes have been counted, we will then announce the winners.

As you know, Ag-Itude Awards are a great way to recognize fellow employees for going above and beyond their normal, everyday work routines. What better way to say "Thank you", "Good job!" or recognizing someone's work ethic and teamwork? Many of you had the same complaint though... that the same people every month are continuously awarded Ag-Itude Awards. It was the policy that only 10 randomly selected employees were awarded with Ag-Itude Awards. This year it was decided that EVERYONE who gets nominated for an Ag-Itude would receive a ribbon. The reason for this change from prizes to ribbons is to get the awards to YOU. We want to recognize each and everyone who's nominated, not just 10 randomly selected employees. And again, because of budget constraints, unfortunately we can't afford to give everyone who gets nominated a prize. However, a prize bag will be awarded to the Employee of the Month and Leader of the Quarter along with a designated parking space for the month and a congratulatory letter from the Director. Again, if you have suggestions as to how to make it better, let us know. We're always open to fresh, new ideas.

Employee of the Month and Leader of the Quarter have already been awarded marked parking spots on the north side of the Ag building. For you OT's (out of towners), we are working on that too.

Finally, the monthly announcement of Employee of the Month and Ag-Itude Awards are going to be made earlier in the month so it is more current. One problem with timing is that I have included a photo of the Employee and Leader. Our belief is that it is important to be able to recognize employees. If I do not have a photo, I can't include it. After the committee's monthly meeting, I contact the nominator to inform the winner and request a photo be emailed to me. If I do not get a photo, the announcement will be delayed. In the future, if no photo is available, that is what I will have to write in the monthly announcement.

Capital Rideshare

Think Pink – The Annual Travel Reduction Survey

Capitol Rideshare and the Office of Travel Reduction Programs is gearing up for the annual Travel Reduction Survey as mandated by law. This survey, pink in color, is delivered to all State employees in Maricopa County who work at a mandatory site. Not all sites are

mandatory - only if they have 50 or more employees in one contiguous site (building or group of buildings). This survey captures information about employees' commute trips. The survey is completely anonymous and is shredded after the information is fed into a computer at Maricopa County.

In the past, data from this survey was instrumental in obtaining bus and vanpool subsidies for employees, creating new bus routes and expanding existing routes. Employees are reminded that it is critical that everyone fill out a survey; especially those who carpool, ride the bus, or telework. The State must achieve as close to 100% response rate as possible. Everyone needs to fill out their survey if they receive one. **So Think Pink! We Need Your Input! For more information, call 602.542.7433.**

Computer Crisis Corner

By Dave Barry

This is an article first published in Louisville Ecentric Observer and will hopefully provide a moment of laughter in regard to technology!



To better understand why you need a personal computer, let's take a look at the pathetic mess that you call your life. We'll start with your so-called "financial records," which I'm guessing consist of a cardboard box marked "TAXES" overflowing with random pieces of paper, including movie-ticket stubs >from the original "Rocky." I used to be disorganized like you. But now I have a computer, so instead of an overflowing cardboard box marked "TAXES," I have an overflowing cardboard box marked "QUICKEN." "Quicken" is the name of a program I have on my computer that's supposed to handle my finances. Unfortunately, before "Quicken" can do this, I have to type all the information on my pieces of paper into the computer, and "Quicken" is very snippy about the format. I cannot just type, "THIS IS EITHER A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE RECEIPT OR A WAD OF POCKET LINT." No, "Quicken" demands exact information, which is why I send all my financial records to a guy named "Evan," who, unlike "Quicken," is able to work with very rough estimates regarding dates, dollar amounts and total number of children. NOTE TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE: I am of course just kidding, and will personally vouch for the accuracy of every statement on my tax return, including the one about using the Jet Ski exclusively for commuting. But here is my point: By not entering financial information into "Quicken," I have saved many hours of valuable time,

which I am able to use productively by playing "Hearts." This is a card game that you can play on a computer. In the version I have, you play against three computerized opponents which the computer labels "Anna," "Lynda" and "Terri." They are vicious sluts and I hate them. I played Hearts against them for three solid weeks, thinking I was winning every single game, always scoring WAY more points than they did, marveling at the sheer stupidity of the decisions they were making. Then I read the instructions. IMPORTANT COMPUTER TIP - Never read the instructions. It turns out that the object of Hearts is to score the lowest number of points. So all the time I thought I was winning, Anaa, Lynda, and Terri were actually snickering at me at a rate of 3.7 million snickers per second. They are able to achieve these speeds thanks to the "microprocessor," a tiny device inside the computer that can perfrom millions of complex calculations almost instantaneously and come up with the wrong answer. At least that's what sometimes happens with the newest and most advanced microprocessor, the "Pentium," which has a flaw that causes mathematical errors. Also it believes that Tokyo is the capital of Vermont. Also, when you play Hearts with it, it sometimes tells you to "go fish." This is the computer that handles the federal budget. I'm not saying that the only reason you need a personal computer is to play games. Once you become experienced, you might also be able to use your computer to activate the Rome Lab Snowball Cam. This device was developed by a computer engineer named Scott Gregory, who works at an Air Force facility in New York called the Rome Laboratory, which deals with high-tech information and surveillance technology. It's also part of something called the World Wide Web, which is sort of an advanced version of the Internet, an international network of tens of thousands of computer users who are constantly using their combined brainpower to think up fantastically innovative ways to waste time. The Snowball Cam is a video camera located in the Rome Lab and hooked into the World Wide Web. Web users can use their computers to look through this camera and order it to "throw" a simulated "snowball" at engineers in the lab. The camera puts a white circle on the screen to show you what you "hit." Gregory set the Snowball Cam up in December. ("I considered doing a Disgruntled Postal Worker Cam," he told me, "but that didn't seem like the holiday spirit.") Since then, more than 1,500 snowballs have been thrown by people all over the world. But my point is that, if you don't have a computer, and you wish to throw snowballs at military surveillance personnel, you must do so in person, thereby greatly increasing your risk of being eaten by professional Air Force dogs. And if THAT doesn't convince you, consider this: According to Bill Barker, the alert reader who told me about the Snowball Cam, you can also use a computer to find out, from anywhere on the planet: -exactly how much coffee is in a

certain machine at Cambridge University in England; - exactly how many sodas are available in certain vending machines at certain major universities; -and much, much more. This is the kind of vital information you could access to if you owned a computer, which is why I urge you to purchase one today, ideally an advanced model such as mine, which, thanks to its state-of-the-art Pentium microprocessor, enabled me to check the spelling on every word in this column in under five sekonds.

February/March Birthdays

Dart Easterday	2/19
Virginia Pitcher	2/19
Raymon Christensen	2/20
Louise Houseworth	2/22
Perry Durham	2/23
Donna Deleree	2/25
Diane Parker	2/27



Cesar Dominguez	3/2
Mario Vera	3/3
Judy Lewis	3/4
Anna Cazares	3/6
L.C. Nelson	3/6
Loui De La Ossa	3/7
Greg Allen	3/9
George Klock	3/9
Annette Besemer	3/10
Pat Stevens	3/10
Oscar Salcedo	3/11
Vlatoko Vojnovic	3/11
Jim Nowlin	3/12
Stacie Archuleta	3/13
Scott Burrill	3/13
Carol Michaels	3/13
Ernesto Silva	3/13
Dwann Francis	3/16
Maria Ibarra	3/16
Bruce Lonardo	3/17
Talia McClelland	3/17